

larry@hearinglossweb.com wrote on 7/21/2005 2:22:02 PM:

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Dear FCC:

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

First I'd like to congratulate you on your ADA site (<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/ada.html>). It's well written, well organized, and pleasing to the eye - a very nice site to visit.

So I was somewhat dismayed when I clicked on your video relay page (<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/videorelay.html>) to see that it perpetuates misinformation that prevents hard of hearing people from obtaining appropriate telecommunications services.

I'm referring to your use of the phrase "Deaf and hard of hearing" when you really mean "Deaf".

The truth of the matter is that over 95% of "Deaf and hard of hearing" people are hard of hearing, and the overwhelming majority of them cannot use VRS services because they don't sign. Your claims that "Deaf and hard of hearing" people benefit from VRS services misinforms the general public that hard of hearing people benefit from services that are really applicable only to Deaf folks.

Oral Hearing Loss (OHL) Advocacy (OHLA) represents people with hearing loss whose primary means of communication is spoken language. This includes people who are hard of hearing, late deafened, and oral deaf. We are working to reclaim ownership of terms that refer to our community. This includes the term "hard of hearing", which is most often misappropriated, as in "Deaf and hard of hearing".

People are so used to seeing the term "Deaf and hard of hearing" that they assume members of the two groups comprise a single group. Hard of hearing people are not "Deaf lite" or "less deaf"; hard of hearing people have a different disability, require different accommodations, and comprise a separate group from Deaf people. The term "Deaf and hard of hearing" is almost never an accurate description of reality, and should generally be avoided.

Referring specifically to telecommunications services for hard of hearing people, many members of our community are very successful using amplified telephones. For those whose hearing loss is more severe, the voice carryover service provided by some relay services is often the accommodation of choice.

We do not, and cannot use Video Relay Service. We would very much appreciate it if you would quit claiming that Video Relay Service serves the "Deaf and hard of hearing" community, because that claim perpetuates the misinformation that hard of hearing people have access to adequate and appropriate services.

Thank you,

Larry Sivertson

larry@hearinglossweb.com

VISIT <http://www.hearinglossweb.com>

free email magazine for hard of hearing, late deafened and oral deaf

send blank email to: HOH-LD-News-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

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COMMENT TO DOCKET 03-123

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

-----Original Message-----

From: Roger Scott [mailto:roscott@mchsi.com]

Sent: Saturday, August 20, 2005 8:52 AM

To: KJMWEB

Subject: Thank you for the new VRS rules

August 20, 2005

Commissioner Kevin J. Martin Kevin Martin

445 12th Street, NW

Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioner Kevin J. Martin Martin,

Thank you for your decisive leadership on July 14, 2005 accepting the National Association of the Deaf petition on captioning, adopting Video Relay Service (VRS) rules that will improve the quality of VRS and ensure that it moves closer to the goal of functional equivalent access to telecommunications, and clarifying that two-line captioned telephone service can be reimbursed by the TRS fund.

I am thrilled with the new VRS rules that the FCC passed to ensure that the service is brought closer to the goal of a functional equivalent telecommunications service. These rules will make our lives easier now that I can access the nation's telephone network using VRS, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and with a prompt response to my initial call. In addition, I look forward to using the VRS Mail feature to leave messages with my friends, family, and co-workers. I also look forward to new rules upgrading and enforcing the quality of captions on television.

However, I urge the FCC to continue to improve the speed of answer for VRS and to enforce FCC rules against blocking. I should be able to use any provider I want without interference from any other provider.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Roger Scott

PO Box 1155

Bethany Beach, DE 19930

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COMMENT TO DOCKET 03-123

-----Original Message-----

From: Jim Bishop [mailto:deafjbb@comcast.net]

Sent: Monday, August 22, 2005 2:22 PM

To: KJMWEB

Subject: Thank you for the new VRS rules

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SEP - 1 2005

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

August 22, 2005
Commissioner Kevin Martin
445 12th St SW
445 12th St SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Martin,

Thank you for your decisive leadership on July 14, 2005 accepting the National Association of the Deaf petition on captioning, adopting Video Relay Service (VRS) rules that will improve the quality of VRS and ensure that it moves closer to the goal of functional equivalent access to telecommunications, and clarifying that two-line captioned telephone service can be reimbursed by the TRS fund.

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However, I urge the FCC to continue to improve the speed of answer for VRS and to enforce FCC rules against blocking. I should be able to use any provider I want without interference from any other provider.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Jim Bishop
PO Box 1408
White Plains, MD 20695

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Comment

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-----Original Message-----

From: robreynol@aol.com [mailto:robreynol@aol.com]

Sent: Monday, August 15, 2005 6:28 PM

To: KAQuinn

Subject: Open letter to FCC: Stop Relay Abuse!

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Hello FCC folks:

I am a longtime deaf user of the relay system (both via TTY and internet). I was fortunate to have the online service to make essential (and valid) business calls to the US during a business trip overseas earlier this summer, as TTYs aren't readily available outside North America.

I am concerned about the recent news on NPR of (hearing) people abusing the relay service with fraudulent and/or obscene calls. I can't tell you how difficult it is to get people to take my relay calls without immediately hanging up. Now, instead of thinking I am a telemarketer, they will think I am a criminal or a sick person.

I would like the FCC to solve this problem. I am willing to participate in a mandatory registration system that requires a username and password in order to maintain the Relay services for people like me who need it. The FCC should require proof of need in order to use Internet Relay, since taxpayers are paying for this service.

Thanks!

Robert Reynolds
Seattle, Washington

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robabbott2002@yahoo.com wrote on 8/10/2005 11:10:56 AM :

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Office of the Secretary

One Characteristic that we all face, is that we are all in different situations. My problem with VCO on VRS, is that you have to make a separate call and run two objects at the same time. It makes it easier and more convenient to use the text Relay System because the VCO does not help me understand the relay operator from the screen.

I am proficient with Sign Language and use both VRS and text based relay through sprint on my computer and occasionally on tty at home.

I think that to say as a blanket, that the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services do not meet our needs is a bit inaccurate. Many of the services we all use everyday are the result of those organizations political and technological gains. The tty, relay services, ADA inclusion, Changes in education and the need for assistive accommodations in schools, etc.

My view, and this is only my opinion, that there is an overlap of services that meet both our needs (the signing and the oral communities). There is also some areas where the oral community can benefit where the signing can not. The opposite is true as well. The key, in my view, is that we need to have well thought out solutions, when we make recommendations and partner with the signing community to carry a strong force and a united voice in making the changes that we need to thrive in this environment. My biggest issue is in employment. Our signing and oral children are told that they have opportunities available to them, when in reality, we suffer along with the signing community from a high unemployment rate. We face glass ceilings and growth limitations and employment discrimination, based on the perceptions of others.

If we look at the spectrum from minorly hard of hearing through to sign dependence and no hearing of speech discrimination at all, we see the need for a very open approach to solutions.

Just a thought or two.

Rob

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Email <sna@magma.ca> wrote:

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

> Not to be disrespectful myself, but might you not be the exception that proves the rule? "Deaf plus the odd hard of hearing person" is not a business case to justify VRS based on Deafandhardofhearing. I gave up on sign language - was basically proficient several years ago, but used it so seldom in either personal or business communications that I lost pretty much what I had learned.

> I know, myself, that I cannot lipread on a video conference call even with big screen TV. A computer screen would be so small as to be useless. I have them bring in CART for such "telephone" meetings. For regular calls, its either Text Relay or direct TTY to TTY. With the advent of NTS and computer based personal TTY, many companies are starting to offer direct TTY communication. Here in Canada, they consider that the case for VRS has not yet been made.

> Rick Sinclair

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

> ----- Original Message -----

> From: <Blondieeng@aol.com>

> To: <hlwork@yahoogroups.com>

> Sent: Wednesday, August 10, 2005 10:39 AM

> Subject: [HLWork] I disagree!

>> Hello Everyone,

>>

>> I respectfully disagree that idea of the use of "Deaf and hard of hearing" to describe VRS services as being useful to Deaf signers only is wrong. I use VRS and I am not Deaf. I am HOH. VRS also allows people to make VCO (Voice Carry Over) calls and I use this for all conference calls for work, which is almost a daily task. I know enough sign to make this useful for me. I know that not all HOH or Deaf people know sign, but to exclude "hard of hearing" as a group who can benefit from VRS is misleading. People need to know all of their options. VRS is a viable option for HOH people. Granted, I chose to learn sign so my options are expanded but to leave out "hard of hearing" when touting the benefits of VRS isn't correct.

Just my opinion.

Take Care, shirley

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

sjcsue@yahoo.com wrote on 7/29/2005 10:12:08 PM :

July 29, 2005

Federal Communications Commission

Dear Federal Communications Commission,

Thank you for your decisive leadership on July 14, 2005 accepting the National Association of the Deaf petition on captioning, adopting Video Relay Service (VRS)

rules that will improve the quality of VRS and ensure that it moves closer to the goal of functional equivalent access to telecommunications, and clarifying that two-line captioned telephone service can be reimbursed by the TRS fund.

I am thrilled with the new VRS rules that the FCC passed to ensure that the service is brought closer to the goal of a functional equivalent telecommunications

service. These rules will make our lives easier now that I can access the nation's telephone network using VRS, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and with a prompt response to my initial call. In addition, I look forward to using the VRS Mail feature to leave messages with my friends, family, and co-workers. I also look forward to new rules upgrading and enforcing the quality of captions on television.

However, I urge the FCC to continue to improve the speed of answer for VRS and to enforce FCC rules against blocking. I should be able to use any provider I want without interference from any other provider.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Susan Hernandez
121 Raleigh Ln
West Islip, NY 11795

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